



Abbot John Albert Eidenschink



Photo added by Dave Weiss

BIRTH	9 Aug 1914 Detroit Lakes, Becker County, Minnesota, USA
DEATH	19 Jun 2004 (aged 89) Collegeville, Stearns County, Minnesota, USA
BURIAL	Saint John's Abbey Cemetery Collegeville Township, Stearns County, Minnesota, USA
MEMORIAL ID	45844298



Added by Dave Weiss

+Abbot John Albert Eidenschink OSB JCD
9 August 1914 - 19 June 2004

Abbot John Albert Eidenschink OSB, seventh Abbot of Saint John's Abbey for eight years (1971-79) and President of the American-Cassinese Congregation of Benedictine monasteries for six years (1983-89), died at Collegeville on June 19, 2004.

Born in Detroit Lakes, Minnesota, August 9, 1914, to Mathilda Brixius and John B. Eidenschink, young Albert lost his father to the pandemic of Spanish influenza that swept America and the world in 1918. His mother abandoned the farm and opened a home laundry in town where she supported three children until her death at 43 in 1932 in the depth of the Great Depression.



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Albert graduated from Holy Rosary School in Detroit Lakes in 1928 and attended Saint John's Preparatory School from 1928 to 1931. Particularly in high school, Albert participated in all types of athletics and lettered in football. His interest in sports continued throughout his life.

Monastic Beginnings

After two years study at Saint John's University, Frater John entered the Abbey's novitiate in July of 1933. He made triennial vows on July 11, 1935. He completed the B.A. degree in Philosophy in 1937 and began theological studies that lasted until his ordination in June, 1941. In 1945 The Catholic University of America conferred upon him the doctorate in canon law.

Assignments and Activities

Father John's indefatigable energy and devotion to the abbey were given expression in a variety of positions of service: Editor of The Oblate, 1935-41; Prep School history teacher, 1938-40, 1941-42; Secretary to Abbot Alcuin Deutsch, 1941-50 and to Abbot Baldwin Dworschak, 1950-69; Subprior, 1947-69; recorder of Mass intentions, 1947-69; Ordinary Confessor of the Novices, 1950-65; Chair of the Abbey's first Building Committee for the 100-Year Plan, 1953-56, and Vice-chair of the Abbey Church Building Committee, 1957-61.

He also served as Professor of Canon Law and Liturgy in the diocesan seminary, 1945-73; Judge on the Matrimonial Tribunal of the Diocese of St. Cloud, 1945-71; Editor of The

Ordo, 1947-68; Editor of the official Holy Name Calendar (Brown & Bigelow), 1948-65; Canonist for the Federation of Saint Benedict, 1957-1971; Canonist for the Federation of Saint Gertrude, 1965-71; Chair of the Liturgical Committee of the Diocese of St. Cloud, 1964-69; and Dean of the School of Divinity, 1969-71.

Abbatial Election

In August 1971 the monks of Saint John's Abbey elected Father John, then 57, to succeed Abbot Baldwin W. Dworschak, OSB, as their seventh Abbot. During Abbot John's eight years in office, he pursued a careful, sensitive and balanced approach to the problems of a religious community adjusting to the post-conciliar period. He improved and organized health care facilities in St. Raphael's Hall providing a comfortable, professional and tasteful environment for a rapidly increasing number of retired and ill monks.

In accord with the statutes of the American-Cassinese Congregation, Abbot John resigned in 1979 at age 65.

Later Years

In 1980 Saint John's Abbey and University honored Abbot John with the Pax Christi Award. The award cited his "willingness to dedicate your life in its entirety to the service of your confreres of Saint John's Abbey and of the whole church."

Following his resignation as Abbot, he accepted an assignment as pastor of Seven Dolors Church, Albany, Minnesota, from 1979 until 1986. In 1987 he became chaplain at Mother of Mercy Nursing Home, Albany, where he served until 1998 when he retired to the Abbey's St. Raphael Health Center. Parishioners and nursing home residents often described him as a good, sensitive and helpful shepherd of his flocks.

Abbot John's training and experience served him well as he undertook translating legal documents from the original Latin. The result, Acts and Decrees of the General Chapters of the American-Cassinese Congregation, 1858-1959, made Acta et Decreta, 1858-1959, more widely accessible to a new generation of monastic canonists and historians.

Abbot John spent his final years as a resident of the Abbey's Health Center. He continued to participate with the community in daily Eucharist, common prayer and recreation. Abbot John succumbed to his final illness and died fortified by the sacraments and the prayers of his community on Saturday, June 19, 2004.

Abbot John was preceded in death by his sister, Esther C. Post, Moose Lake, and his brother, Leo C. Eidenschink, Detroit Lakes. He is survived by Esther's three sons and Leo's two sons and a daughter.

The Liturgy of Christian Burial will be celebrated for Abbot John Eidenschink at 3:30 p.m. on Friday, 25 June, in Saint John's Abbey Church with burial in the abbey cemetery.

We ask each community member to offer two Masses according to the manner of his participation in the priesthood of Christ. We commend our brother, John, to your prayers.

Abbot John Klassen, OSB, and the monks of Saint John's.

Family Members

Parents



John Baptist Eidschink
1885–1918



Mathilda *Brixius* Eidschink
1889–1932

Siblings



Leo Christopher Eidschink
1912–2004



Esther Catherine *Eidschink* Post
1917–1992

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